



## **FACTS ABOUT Licensing and Registration Requirements for Sign Contractors**

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The following information can be used to help determine sign contractor licensing and registration requirements associated with electrical licensing under Chapter 19.28 RCW and construction contractor registration under Chapter 18.27 RCW.

### **What are the licensing and certification requirements for electrical sign contractors?**

Electrical licensing and certification is **required**:

- To install an electric sign. A sign includes all parts included in the listing.
- To install, modify, or maintain a sign face, sign ballast, lamp socket, lamp holder, or lamp, disconnect switch, circuit breaker or fuse, electrical conductors or equipment or any other part of a listed electric sign.
- To install conduit or conductors in a concrete pole base, concrete slab or ditch.
- To install, modify or maintain neon tubing and the supports for the tubing.
- To install, modify or maintain sign transformers, neon tubing receptacles, and all of the associated conductors and equipment in the sign primary and secondary circuits.
- To install, modify or maintain any electrical equipment or conductors on any part of a sign, sign support or billboard.
- To install, modify or maintain any electrical equipment or conductors on any part of a building.

WAC 296-46B-925(8) states, *“Firms who clean and /or replace lamps in luminaries are not included in the requirements for licensing in Chapter 19.28 RCW. This exemption does not apply to electrical signs as defined in the NEC.”*

Electric signs are **not** luminaries. Electrical contractor licensing is required to replace and clean lamps in electric signs and to engage in the business of changing sign faces in the field, even though the department will not require a permit and inspection for this work.

### **What are the requirements for subcontracting?**

Electrical contractors can only subcontract to other electrical contractors. If the electrical contractor needs to **perform or subcontract the work of any other non-electrical trade**, the electrical contractor must also be a registered general or specialty contractor who meets the requirements of Chapter 18.27 RCW.

Electrical contractors who need to perform or subcontract work that is non-electrical should see Chapter 18.27 RCW for the general contracting registration requirements. Information also is available on L&I's web site – [www.LNI.wa.gov](http://www.LNI.wa.gov). Click on Trades & Licensing, then Contractors.

## What are the requirements for contractor registration?

Contractor registration under 18.27 RCW as a specialty contractor or general contractor is required for sign structure construction such as:

- Pouring concrete and masonry
- Welding or assembling steel structures
- Painting
- Excavating
- Carpentry
- Installing vinyl overlays, provided the sign face does not have to be removed

RCW 18.27.010 states, “Contractor means any person, firm, or corporation who or which, in the pursuit of an independent business undertakes to, or offers to undertake, or submits a bid to, construct, alter, repair, add to, subtract from, improve, move, wreck, or demolish, for another, any building, highway, road, railroad, excavation or other structure, project, development, or improvement attached to real estate or to do any part thereof including the installation of carpeting or other floor covering, the erection of scaffolding or other structures.”

## Are there exemptions to licensing and registration requirements?

Licensing and registration are not required to clean the non-electrical parts of an electric sign if the sign face is not removed.

Contractor registration is not required for boom truck or crane operation under the direction and control of a registered contractor or licensed electrical contractor, solely for service delivery.

## Where can you get more information?

More information about licensing and registration is available on L&I’s web site – [www.LNI.wa.gov](http://www.LNI.wa.gov) -- or by calling the Contractor Registration hotline at 1-800-647-0982. You may also call your local L&I office. See listings under “Washington State of” in the government section or the white pages of the telephone book.

**Visit the L&I web site at [www.LNI.wa.gov](http://www.LNI.wa.gov)**

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